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*Amendment to H.R. 1 to prohibit taxpayer funding of NASCAR sponsorship defeated; Intends to introduce legislation to end taxpayer funded motor racing*

**Washington, DC** -- An amendment by Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN) to prohibit the Department of Defense from using tens of millions of taxpayer funds for NASCAR race car sponsorships failed by a vote of 148 to 281. McCollum called taxpayer funding for NASCAR race cars an "absurdity." McCollum's amendment was supported by the spending watchdog group Citizens Against Government Waste calling it spending that "Americans do not need and taxpayers simply cannot afford."

The amendment was offered on H.R. 1, the appropriations bill to fund the federal government through September 30, 2011 in which the Republican House majority makes deep eliminates support for homeless veterans and makes deep cuts into federal investments in community health, women's health, and environmental protection. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that the deep cuts in H.R. 1 would result in 800,000 Americans losing their jobs.

"This was a vote about priorities and making smart choices. With trillion dollar federal deficits this vote to protect taxpayer funded race cars shows that even a Tea Party Republican-led Congress is not serious about cutting wasteful spending. The American people need to know that a majority in Congress is willing to cut homeless veterans, community health centers, and family planning services, but spend millions of tax dollars for race cars," said McCollum Chief of Staff Bill Harper.

While Rep. McCollum supports Department of Defense recruitment efforts at NASCAR events as well as other professional sporting events, she intends to introduce legislation to prohibit taxpayer funds from being used for sponsorship of race cars, dragsters, Indy cars, and motorcycle racing, as well as repeal the \$45 million special tax earmark for NASCAR and race track owners included in the 2010 law that extended the Bush tax cuts and added \$858 billion to the federal budget deficit.

Congresswoman McCollum was unable to vote on her NASCAR amendment or comment on the outcome of the vote. She is traveling today on official government business to the Middle East honoring a longstanding obligation to the Pentagon's National Defense University to address a national security conference.

*Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.*

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